

the bill that were targeted by Senator COBURN's amendment were included by the House in their version of the fiscal year 2009 Energy and Water Development appropriations bill. The Senate also carried one of the eight in our version of the bill.

So while I did not sponsor any of these projects, I find these projects are consistent with the work performed by the Department of Energy, and I saw no reason to eliminate them.

Let me briefly describe the sorts of projects that we are talking about.

One of the projects would provide \$951,000 for the direct methanol fuel cell. This type of fuel cell has the potential to meet low power needs, less than 1 kilowatt, with increased performance and improved storage ability.

Another project is focused on solar energy, providing \$951,000 to improve the efficiency of home windows, with the same goal—reducing net energy consumption.

As I said, every project on this list was requested by one or more Members of Congress. The process is fully transparent and the Members of Congress who requested this funding are fully accountable. That is why I opposed the Coburn amendment.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH.) The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can

do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Just last week we had to trade in our truck, which was fully functional, in excellent condition and paid for, to finance a vehicle that we could afford to drive out of the local area. I have family and friends at Hill AFB, UT and in Eugene, Oregon. I have driven my truck to visit them before but would seriously have to plan ahead and save money to do it again using our truck. So, now we have a new to us used vehicle (a 2002) that is great, but now I have two car payments all over again. We had to weigh the fact that while we had a great truck, what good does it do you if you have to actually think about driving it someplace as close as Mountain Home? We used to drive it between Mountain Home and Micron all the time five years ago and never gave it much thought. Thank goodness we live in Kuna now, but still, when I go back to school, the 25 miles or so between Kuna and BSU would make a serious dent in my GI Bill money, which is just enough to cover daycare and tuition.

MEGHAN and WESLEY.

I am writing to you today out of major concern for our nation's stability. The price per barrel of oil continues to rise and, with it, so does our cost of living. I am just an average stay-at-home housewife raising my 6-month-old daughter with my husband, who works hard to be our sole provider. In the last six months, we have resorted to me giving up my job as a result of rising fuel, grocery and daycare costs. My husband owns an SUV, which is parked stationery now in our garage, and is taking my sedan to work each day. I rarely leave the house because of fuel costs skyrocketing! We do not have a lot of debt and rely on our savings, which is now dwindling to keep up with the rising costs of everyday living here in Idaho.

We are hurting, and I know from speaking to friends and family, they are hurting, too. The economic stimulus checks that we received went into my savings account to help our family pay for gas and groceries. Every two weeks, I buy groceries and it costs us \$165 a visit, every time we fill up the tank on our SUV its \$100 dollars every week in a half. I believe that we are in an economic crisis and that we are entering a depression, not a recession. The media maintains that we have not entered a recession yet. What reality are the media and our legislators living in?

Please take control of this situation! Do not let oil govern the direction our nation is sliding towards. Offer consumers some sort of fuel alternative. Fortunately, we do not use oil to heat our home. Those homeowners must be reeling watching the fuel costs soar. You must react now! Salaries are stagnant, the cost of energy is rising, food costs are rising, home prices are falling all of these indicators of an impending Depression!

We cannot afford to wait 5 years for solutions to today's energy crisis! My recommendation is to put a team together in the city of Boise, which includes average middle class citizens that can give a more realistic view of everyday living costs and come up with some real alternatives/solutions which can be implemented now!

Both my husband and I have pulled our 401k plans out of the stock markets hoping for some stability. After working so hard to save through the years, it is heart wrenching to watch your 401k savings spiral downward! America is bleeding and we have to stop the flow of red! Offer the American people some

real solutions. Solutions that do not include lining the pockets of foreign oil industries with our bleeding American dollars!

I thank you for your time. I am sure you are well aware of this crisis. I wanted to give you a voice from an average middle class American Homemaker. I look forward to your administration making a memorable stand by offering America real solutions to this energy crisis!

ADRIANA.

Thank you for asking our opinion; this is a fresh change from the normal status quo in Washington. I live in central Idaho in a subdivision that has 3 full time residents and the closest town has a grand total of less than two hundred people. I love where I live and would not trade it for anything but it is getting harder and harder to just pay the bills let alone do any outdoor activities that require fuel. I work in construction and the company office that I work for is 25 miles away and 1300 feet higher in elevation than where I live. My wife works 15 miles away and has the same elevation change. This winter we had over five feet of snow on the level and temperatures below zero for many days. Needless to say, riding a bicycle is out of the question, driving a small car with no ground clearance just to get good mileage is no more than an invitation to spend the night in the snow in freezing temperatures. I have been paying \$4.99 a gallon for diesel for the last 4 weeks or so and gas for the cars has been over \$4.00 for about the same amount of time. Our weekly gas budget has almost doubled in the two plus years that we have lived here not to mention the cost of propane going up. I can guaranty you that our wages have not kept up and it does not look like there will be any increases in income in the near future. In order to have a weekend at the lake we now have to take at least one day off to make it worthwhile to go and go once every three weeks instead of every week or so. I have friends and family that used to come up all of the time and can no longer afford to come up. Tourism is a very large part of the economy up here and without the people coming to visit, going out to dinner, buying gas and just spending money this area will suffer.

I believe that we are being governed by a few very vocal extremists and special interest groups, who have enough money that they do not care or have lost touch with the average person. They advocate for and lobby for (I do not have time to lobby for anything or go to meetings I have to work to pay for the gas) all of these special regulations that supposedly protect something. I have been told by the government on more than one occasion that "We do not care what it costs to do that but you must comply to our regulations". We need to get the government out of the way, drill for oil in Alaska and off our coasts, build more refineries, increase the atomic usage and cut the ties with the countries that do not like us, but want our money and use it against us. In short we need to become more self sufficient, like we were in the past.

Thank you for your time

WADE.

Thank you very much for your e-mail. I get so frustrated and worried and feel like "we the people" are never considered by the politicians who run our government.

For the past 20 years I have lived on a small ranch in the south east corner of Idaho right near the Utah border. It has always been hard for us to make a go of it on the ranch. In fact, without our retirement we would never have been able to make it. Our nearest grocery store is either 36 miles to Malad or 46 miles to Tremonton, Utah. The